ABSTRACT

Techniques are disclosed for managing instant messages, including the display of windows for incoming messages, as well as for managing status information for instant messaging users. In one aspect, an instant messaging user defines policy information to programmatically determine a response to an arriving instant message. As an example, the policy may control whether a new window will pop up for a newly-arriving message, and may specify other attributes of the window if desired. In another aspect, an instant messaging user defines attributes pertaining to how his instant messaging status will be presented to others.

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